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THURSDAY, JANUARY 24, 2013

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IMPORT NEWS

SERVING PORT COLBORNE • WAINFLEET • SHERKSTON • LOWBANKS • ISSUE NO. 4 VOLUME 17

For news updated daily see www.importnews.ca

HOSPITALS RALLY

Unhappy prognosis

VICTORIA GRAY
QMI Agency Niagara

WELLAND — Ashley Brockway barely made it from Port Colborne to the Welland hospital to deliver her first child and she's worried if she has more children they will be delivered in an ambulance on the way to the new St. Catharines hospital.

Her second child was induced at the Welland Hospital because Brockway is the only person in her household who drives.

"I was afraid that if something happened I wouldn't be able to get to the Welland hospital in time. I have quick labours. Our first child only took two hours," she said. "We need (pediatrics and

obstetrics) here for safety, first of all and peace of mind."

Niagara Falls Mayor Jim Diodati and Welland Mayor Barry Sharpe teamed up with their councils and others to host a rally on Saturday afternoon at the Welland Arena on King St. called Putting Women and Children First. It's purpose was to fight to keep obstetrics, pediatrics and other services at the Niagara Falls and Welland hospitals.

see **HOSPITAL RALLY** | page 2

VICTORIA GRAY Staff Photo
More than 100 people attended the Putting Women and Children First Rally.



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upfront

■ HOSPITAL RALLY

Mayors fight for services

FROM PAGE 1

These services could be moved out of the Welland and Niagara Falls hospital sites to the new St. Catharines hospital on Fourth Ave. as early as March 24.

Diodati, Sharpe and many councillors don't want to see that happen.

"This is a battle — a fight that has been going on for a long, long time, (it's been happening) since I got on council and it's one that has been driving me nuts," Diodati said.

Niagara Falls Coun. Wayne Gates said the move would put women and children at risk.

Sharpe told the more than 100 people at the rally that building a new hospital in Niagara Falls may be a good idea — for the Niagara Gateway communities like Fort Erie and Niagara-on-the-Lake, but South Central and West Central communities like Welland, Pelham and Port Colborne need services, too. "A new hospital to serve the gateway could make perfect sense, but a speculative new south Niagara hospital to justify more service consolidation is a concept I will never support," he said.

The rally was held to convince the Niagara Health System and provincially appointed supervisor Dr. Kevin Smith to keep services in local hospitals for six months after the St. Catharines facility opens and for the tripartite committee to reconvene and finish their review of the NHS.

Jillian Craig and her husband Andrew are expecting their second child. The birth is already scheduled at St. Catharines General Hospital, but she may have a third and worries about the trip to St. Catharines from Niagara Falls.

She was also questioned whether the plan to build a new off-ramp near the hospital, providing access from



VICTORIA GRAY Staff Photo

Mayor of Niagara Falls Jim Diodati plans to continue to fight to keep pediatrics and obstetrics in local hospitals with the help of Welland mayor Barry Sharpe and a barrage of city councillors.

Hwy. 406, would occur.

If it doesn't, the existing ramp at Fourth Ave. will be unable to handle the traffic, he said. "That means cars will be backed up along the highway," he said. The Craigs made a video of the trip from Fort Erie City Hall to the facility of Fourth Ave. in St. Catharines that was shown at the rally. It took them 49 minutes in good weather and traffic.

"Imagine trying to do that with contractions or in a snow storm," he said.

Dr. Sabnavis Rau, a semi-

retired Welland pediatrician, said he didn't think a south Niagara Hospital would be built in his lifetime and if services are moved from the existing hospitals they would never come back.

"I'm so sorry we are going to lose — our nurses, their morale is down and so is the doctors," he said. "Let us hope something better comes of all this."

Both mayors hope to take momentum from the rally to reopen the discussion with Dr. Smith, the NHS and the public.

■ BYLAWS: Port Colborne having problem with 24-hour-period rule

School boards may be billed for sidewalk snow removal

MAYRYANNE FIRTH
INPORTNEWS Staff

PORT COLBORNE — The message doesn't seem to be clear.

When snow falls in the lakeside city, not all property owners are hopping outdoors with shovel in hand.

City councillors brought forward several snow removal-related concerns at their Monday, Jan. 14 meeting, in hopes of finding solutions prior to the next snowfall.

Ward 2 Coun. Angle Desmarais took issue with the sidewalk on Davis St. behind DeWitt Carter Public School. Snow clearing remains a problem at that site, she said, as it has been for several years.

Snow remains on the sidewalk days after it falls, she told councillors.

"The sidewalk is never cleared in a 24-hour period," Desmarais said, asking whether a contractor can be called and charges applied immediately to District School Board of Niagara, which is responsible for clearing the property. Not only does it impede access for children taking the route to walk to school, it also keeps people from accessing the Avondale store, which abuts the school-yard property.

Ward 1 Coun. Bill Steele noted there are other school properties in the city owned by various school boards that have similar problems.

It was suggested that DSRN, as well as Niagara Catholic District School Board and the French Catholic board, be put on notice that a contractor will come and clear their properties and they will be charged

if snow isn't cleared in a timely manner. There are no French public schools in Port Colborne.



Staff were directed to start flagging properties and send notices to the owners that they will be charged if the city has to clear their snow.

On the other end of the spectrum, Ward 2 Coun. Yvon Doucet has received calls from residents wondering why city workers have been seen clearing paths downtown — a task reserved for private property owners.

"It's a level of service issue," said Ron Hanson, the city's director of engineering and operations.

The city employs temporary workers to assist with snow removal in the winter. When they're available, they're used to help "open quadrants in the downtown corridor," he said.

This work is only done downtown and not in residential areas, and only when manpower is available, he added.

As the city continues to conduct its service audit, council can determine whether this is a service it wants to continue, to drop or to expand, said Mayor Vance Badway.

As there seems to be several properties throughout the city, both residential and otherwise, that are repeat offenders when it comes to snow clearing, Ward 4 Coun. Ron Bodner suggested staff begin making a running list.

Those properties should then be monitored and cleared right after the 24-hour threshold, he said.

If they need to be continually cleared by the city, he questioned why the city would wait for a complaint to come in.

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portraits

■ JUNIOR B HOCKEY: Pirates hope to celebrate move to new arena with championship run

House-warming gift

BERND FRANKE
InPortNEWS

PORT COLBORNE — Timing is everything in building arenas and in rebuilding the hockey teams playing in them.

Take the soon-to-open Vale Health and Wellness Centre as a case in point. If the Port Colborne Pirates are able to build on last year's success by taking the next step, the city's new twin-pad arena will celebrate its inaugural season by being the right place at exactly the right time.

Westside Arena was never home to a junior B champion during its 53-year run, yet the all-purpose community centre could lift a championship banner to the rafters before it even turns one.

At least that's the plan Bryan Kelly, head coach and general manager of the Don Cherry's Port Colborne Pirates, and Dayne Phillips, the team's captain and leading scorer, want their purpose-driven team to follow come playoff time in the highly competitive Greater Ontario Junior Hockey League.

Last season Port Colborne took the eventual Sutherland Cup champion St. Catharines Falcons to six games before losing in the Golden Horseshoe Conference final.

Having many of those players back with another year of big-game experience under their belts has the Pirates believing this season could be their year.

"If we're ever going to make a run the closest it's ever going to get is with this team. This group truly believes they can go all the way."

Phillips, a Port Colborne native in his fourth and final season with his hometown hockey team, likewise is confident the Pirates can

contend for a conference championship.

"That's been the goal all time, if you don't play for the title, what else are you playing for," he said of the team's desire to give Port Colborne its first Sutherland Cup since 1943.

Port Colborne's new twin pad should be up and running long before the junior B playoffs get underway in late February. Official opening of the \$32-million Vale Health and Wellness Centre takes place Saturday, Feb. 16, during the Sports/est weekend with the Pirates hosting the Niagara Falls Canucks in a 2 p.m. faceoff the following day.

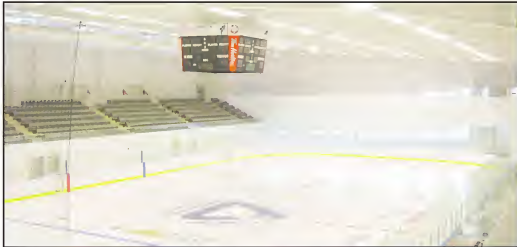
As the primary tenants of the larger of the facility's two NHL-sized ice surfaces, the Pirates will have their own dressing room, much of which is being built by construction students at Lakeshore Catholic High School.

Lakeshore and Port High also will be getting dressing rooms they can paint in their school colours. However, unlike the Pirates, the Gators and Blue Bears won't have exclusive use of the changerooms.

In all there are 13 dressing rooms in the twin pad, each with its own washroom and shower and all with direct access to the ice.

The rink the Pirates will be calling home has seating for 1,000, but can comfortably accommodate 400 to 500 students without appearing the least bit crowded. A high ceiling that towers above the ice and large window panes contribute to an atmosphere of spaciousness.

"It reminds me of the rinks I've seen in Europe. There are a lot of windows, so there's a lot of natural light," Bryan Elliott, a recreation programmer with the city, said.



BERND FRANKE Staff Photo
TOP: Junior B hockey's new home in Port Colborne will be the larger of the two rinks at Vale Health and Wellness Centre on Elizabeth St. near the corner of Hwy. 3 on the city's east side. RIGHT: Michael Agrette, left, who is interested in bringing an Ontario girls high school hockey championships to Port Colborne, and recreation programmer Bryan Elliott look at glass-covered boards on the players benches in the smaller of the city's two new arenas. The class will let sledge hockey players follow the action between shifts.



Fans used to seeing advertising on rink boards will be in for a surprise when they visit The Vale for the first time.

There aren't any. Mesh logos instead have been frozen right into the ice, thereby eliminating the need to maintain the signs.

There also is advertising on

the score clocks, all of which are being sponsored by businesses in the community. The one directly over centre ice in the Pirates Pond is sponsored by Canadian Niagara Power.

Convenient touches, such as water fountains behind each of the four player benches, extend to make the arenas meet the

needs of all user groups. Sledge hockey players, for instance, will be able to follow the action between shifts, thanks to glass boards in front of the benches in Rink No. 2.

A spacious foyer separating the main rink from the gym and swimming pools that will be maintained by

the YMCA features murals of five Port Colborne hockey luminaries — Tedder Kennedy, Bronco Horvath, Don Gallinger, Don Simmons, Harry Dick — and a trophy case large enough for, dare we say it, another Sutherland Cup.

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ourview

Idle No More: 'You've got (black)mail'

First Nations struggles have long been framed as an "us versus them" tug-of-war. For many, particularly those on reserves, there are constant struggles with issues like poverty, addiction and crime, to name a few.

Their plight has been a source of social and political unrest for decades.

So, when there's an uprising like Idle No More, it would make sense that others across the country stand beside them, right?

Not exactly. The movement is a protest against the Conservative government's controversial Bill C-45, particularly "all legislation that violates treaties, indigenous sovereignty and subsequently environmental protections of land and water," the group said in a release last week. In response, First Nations are using innocent Canadians as blackmail.

On Wednesday, Jan. 16, demonstrators in Niagara Falls blocked traffic at the Rainbow Bridge for 10 minutes and snarled traffic on Highway 420 for 20 minutes. In Windsor, about 600 marched on the Ambassador Bridge to Detroit, backing up commercial traffic for blocks.

Across the country, roads and railways were being blocked in an effort to get the government's attention. To their credit, most of the demonstrations have been peaceful.

Listen to the words of some militant leaders, however, and there is a sense that it could change.

"These are demands, not requests," Grand Chief Derek Nepinak, from Manitoba, said recently. "The Idle No More movement has the people, it has the people and the numbers that can bring the Canadian economy to its knees." Not surprisingly, non-aboriginal Canadians are upset. Recent polls show support for First Nations eroding. There are questions surrounding the government's allocation of billions of dollars to reserves, large chunks of which have been misspent by First Nations leaders or simply disappeared.

It could get ugly on the roads, as angry drivers are now going through blockades. If First Nations' credibility wasn't already injured, some of its people may be next.

— Cory Smith

■ COLUMN

Running rings around a tree

If a tree falls in Wainfleet...
...does it make a sound in the Philippines?

So I'm up and at 'em and down the driveway with a cup of coffee in hand to retrieve my morning paper when I notice a large tree had snapped at the base and fallen over.

This 100-year-old maple, hollowed at the core by a colony of carpenter ants, is now leaning precariously against the power lines along Lakeshore Rd., with the lower limbs blocking my driveway.

I return to my office and immediately call Wainfleet's township hall to have its works department remove the tree which might technically be on township property.

I explain the situation to Connie and she says no, no, no — not Wainfleet's jurisdiction — and she gives me the 1-800 number to call Ontario Hydro.

So I call Ontario Hydro.

I explain how I'm trapped in my own driveway and if I had to get out for whatever dire reason, like an emergency run to the liquor store, I couldn't.

And the guy at Ontario Hydro says no, no, no — they're not their power lines they're phone lines — I have to call Bell Telephone.

So the next guy gives me the 1-800 number for Ontario One and I explain my situation, adding no emergency



WILLIAM THOMAS

vehicle if needed, would be able to come down my driveway. That guy says no, no, no — not the correct division and he tells me to call Bell 611.

Now the Bell guy — after saying no, no, no — assures me I'm getting close and instructs me to phone a special 1-800 number.

There, I get a nice young man who is sympathetic to my predicament and he is, indeed, the guy who can arrange to remove the tree once I give him enough information to both steal my identity and write my obituary.

Talking to Ryan I detect a long-distance fade-in, fade-out on the line. This kind of poor quality connection would not be unusual for Bell Telephone but my fear is they'll put a clever name on it like "Call Detachment" and bill me for that. Too. For 30 years I've paid a fee not to be listed in their phone book. And, curious, I ask Ryan where he's located and he says, "The Philippines."

So although the first four people who were based mostly in the North

American hemisphere cannot help me, a kid from Manila will get the job done?

I suspect Ryan is the culturally appropriate name that Bell's offshore call centre assigned him and I'm actually dealing with either Magtanggol or Immanuel, two highly popular male Filipino names.

Ryan books me an appointment with a work crew that will take down the tree "tomorrow."

"No, no, no I say to Ryan. I'm being held captive in my own driveway so tomorrow will not work and besides, if the removal crew you're sending to my house is coming from the Philippines, it won't even get here by tomorrow what with the time difference and everything.

Plus the Philippines is still cleaning up after Typhoon Bopha which in the grand scheme of things is a way, way bigger mess than the one at the end of my driveway.

Ryan promises to look onto an earlier appointment and sadly, we say goodbye after spending much of our lives together.

So I then phone the Niagara Regional Police and explain that if the Bell lines give way, that tree will become a serious traffic problem or even take out Mrs. Konig who walks that road way too slowly with her hands behind her back.

see **TREE TROUBLES** | page 5

■ readers' views

Do the math, keep school open

There is a saying that a three-legged camel is the result of a committee trying to build a horse. Imagine the scenarios proposed to remedy the District School Board of Niagara (DSBN) low student enrollment. See any problems?

DSBN identifies problem: not enough students. So, far so good.

Ultimately, senior administration of DSBN unveils three scenarios to solve problem: build more schools and bus more students. See any problems? We don't get it.

Step 1. Imagine a committee — the Accommodations Review Committee — a "dignified process" producing a committee that reports to a committee pretending to offer you input. See any problems?

Step 2. Imagine that you complain because Ridgeway Crystal Beach High School (RCBHS) is at capacity. You express emotion, fear, frustration even outrage, through your input. Then imagine the representative of the committee reporting to the committee mocks or criticizes your input to the local media as "lacking intelligent information and/or being too emotional." We still don't get it.

Step 3. Imagine the senior administration's "honorable" intention might be to frustrate or shame or demoralize you into silence and compliance with any decision the committee unveils to the committee that reports to the committee. Understanding it yet? We still don't get it.

Step 4. Let's imagine a reason is invented to close RCBHS, the only school operating at capacity enrollment. Then imagine RCBHS students being bussed to this distant institution located where our students cannot walk or from school, before or after school. See any problems for RCBHS parents, students, or after-school activities?

Step 5. Let's imagine, three scenarios that produce costly building and busing projects — not more students. Imagine a "head fake" to close RCBHS under the guise of building a mega school requiring mega busses to solve the initial problem described by the DSBN as "too few students." See any problems now? Make any sense? We didn't think so either.

This stuff doesn't add up. After all the expensive building and busing proposals, we still have the same number of students in our district.

Step 6. Well done. You did the math. Now help DSBN keep our school and our students in our community.

Bill Bowen, John Millington, Ron Claus
Ridgeway

Thank-you from The Music Depot

The Music Depot would like to thank our community for all of their support over the past year.

Working with organizations and businesses such as the Downtown BIA in Welland and Port Colborne, Canalside Restaurant, Port Cares, The Hope Centre, Port Colborne Lions Club and many others has helped us to offer many exciting and educational opportunities to our music students in 2012.

These experiences have taught our students the importance of charity, community involvement, confidence and teamwork, and has also helped The Music Depot to establish a new direction based on giving back to our community through music and the arts. Thank you again for all of your support and we hope to continue working in to the new year.

We would also like to take this opportunity to thank our students and parents for all of their commitment and dedication as well as all of our fans who have attended the past 12 Music Depot performances over the year.

Happy harmonious year to all in 2013

Morgan Whelan
The Music Depot

■ **CRIME:** Restrictions sought after Newtown tragedy**NRP welcomes tighter U.S. gun laws**

TONY RICCIUTO
QMI Agency Niagara

NIAGARA FALLS — While Canada's gun laws are different from those south of the border, a decision by New York State to tighten their gun laws is seen as a step in the right direction by Niagara Regional Police Deputy Chief Joe Matthews.

"For us in Ontario, we know that a good number of illegal guns in Ontario have their origin in the United States, so it's always a positive thing to have neighbouring jurisdictions tighten up their gun-control legislation," said Matthews. "It's a good thing not only for us in Niagara, but especially the Toronto area and the rest of Ontario."

On Tuesday, Jan. 15, New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo signed into law some of America's toughest gun restrictions since the mass shooting last month at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Conn.

Twenty schoolchildren, aged six and seven, and six educators were killed after a gunman entered the school and began shooting.

Matthews said our gun-control legislation is "significantly stronger than that of the United States and in the police community we certainly realize that it's responsible gun ownership and effective gun control. That's what makes a community safe."

The changes in legislation in New York State include a ban on assault weapons, limits on ammunition capacity and new

measures to keep guns out of the hands of mentally ill individuals.

Cuomo said it's "common sense" that people who are mentally ill should not have access to guns. The National Rifle Association issued a statement saying their members are "outraged at the draconian gun control bill."

In addition, these gun-control schemes have been tried before and failed and that they will have no impact on public safety and crime, said the association which this week launched a shooting video game.

Gun owners in the United States say they have a constitutional right to have a firearm. In many states, a driver's licence is the only identification needed to purchase many types of weapons legally.

Gun laws in Canada are stricter. A person could register and then wait up to 60 days before obtaining a firearm. They also must take a safety course and go through background checks.

Anyone coming into Canada from the United States must declare all firearms and weapons at the Canada Border Services Agency office. If they are not declared, the weapons and firearms will be seized and the individual could face criminal charges.

Canadians also need documents to prove they are entitled to possess a firearm in Canada, and the weapons must be transported safely.

tony.ricciuto@sunmedia.ca

■ **TREE TROUBLES****FROM PAGE 4**

The dispatcher agrees to send out a cruiser.

Now onto my second cup of coffee with no more paying much attention to my dilemma. I decide to take matters into my own hands.

I grab a pack of matches and a container of gasoline from the shed and head for the road. My plan is to throw the trunk of the tree with gasoline, throw a match to it and then call the Wainfleet Fire Department.

They wouldn't dare bounce me back to Ryan in Southeast Asia if it's a fire instead of a fallen tree.

That's when I spot the police officer and a little while in the back of my brain says: "You might see it as removal by fire but he might

have a different take on this. Like arson."

So Todd, a fire officer of the law, reports the situation and I return to my office to take his advice and guess who I get on the line?

That's right, Connie! I'm back with Connie like we dated in high school and then reunited in the nursing home.

Back where I started about 800 1-800 calls later with just a little jetlag from my side trip to the Philippines. Connie calls Fabio of the Wainfleet works department who happens to be driving by.

Although I suspect his real name is Ryan, Fabio tells me I'm the luckiest man in the whole township because he's got a tree removal crew over on Rathbun Rd.

and the whole thing is taken care of in less than 20 minutes.

Plus I get to keep the firewood. I do not mean to be ungrateful to the Wainfleet works department but about a month ago you guys cut down a tree along the creek to the west of my house and you excavated the banks to get the water flowing better and trucked all the soil away.

Remember? Yeah, well I buried my gorgeous Tabby named Wiggie at the base of that tree in 1986.

Thanks for your helping on taking down the maple tree, but if it's not too much trouble — I want my cat back, too.

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■ **POVERTY:** Six-week programs of empowerment being offered across Niagara

Health centres to turn poor into advocates for change

VICTORIA GRAY
inPortNEWS Staff

PORT COLBORNE — The war against poverty needs voices.

Front line staff and advocates for the poor have tried to fight for justice and equality, but they can't win alone.

"Politicians often say they don't know what people who live in poverty are going through — they don't hear about the issues because nobody comes forward," says Bridges Community Health.

Community health promoter Lori Kleinsmith, left, and health promoter at the Fort Erie location Rhonda Barron want to help people living in poverty speak out to make change in their own lives, the community and possibly the country.



VICTORIA GRAY Staff Photo
Bridges Community Health Centre health promoter in Port Colborne Lori Kleinsmith, left, and health promoter at the Fort Erie location Rhonda Barron want to help people living in poverty speak out to make change in their own lives, the community and possibly the country.

who complete the first year of the course will continue to get support from facilitators.

"It doesn't matter what the person's situation is, if they are interested we will make it work for them," she says.

Centres in all four municipalities will deliver a six-week course focusing on communication, effective storytelling and personal advocacy.

Rhonda Barron, a health promoter at Bridges' Fort Erie centre, says advocacy can be as simple as learning to write questions down for meetings with landlords, caseworkers and others, or gaining the confidence to speak to groups.

"Not everybody will want to do the same thing about the same issue, and they don't have to. Hopefully, this will help them see some personal growth in themselves," Barron says.

The four centres will run the course twice, from March to May and from June to August. Participants will be asked to commit to six half-day sessions. Transportation, meals and refreshments will be provided.

In the second year of the program, interested participants will go through another six-week course focused on putting their skills into action.

They can speak publicly about their experiences being poor, use social media or join a board of directors to get the word out about poverty.

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■ **FOOD:** Sandi Richard visits Wainfleet school

TV chef inspires youths to eat healthy

VICTORIA GRAY
inPortNEWS Staff

WAINFLEET — Youths have the power to help families become healthier and change the future of food in Canada — they just need some tools to fix the problems adults created.

Sandi Richard apologized to students at St. Elizabeth Catholic Elementary School on the morning of Tuesday, Jan. 15 on behalf of her generation and past generations for screwing up their food.

"We messed up and now you're stuck with it," she told them. "You're the game changers. You have so much power in society, you have no idea. Food issues can be fixed by you, but you need truths, tools and information."

Richard hosts Food Network's *Fixing Dinner* and *Let's Do Lunch*. She has also written five bestselling meal-planning books. Her company, Cooking for the Rushed, partnered with University of Windsor professor Sarah Woodruff to develop an interactive presentation called



VICTORIA GRAY Staff Photo
Sandi Richard, host of the Food Network's *Fixing Dinner* and author of five bestselling meal-planning books, is shown visiting St. Elizabeth Catholic Elementary School for discussion on food preparation and nutrition.

Kinct-Eid geared toward adolescents and teens to help them take charge of their bodies and make better nutrition choices.

The pair conducted their first workshop at St. Elizabeth and plan to deliver the program to more than 64 schools in Niagara over the next year or two before taking the program nationwide.

"We really get away from obesity and looks and focus more on how eating processed foods makes people feel and telling them the truth about what's happening to their bodies," Richard said.

She showed students five truths about eating processed foods, including that phosphates in soda stick to calcium and leaves the body causing osteoporosis, how arteries become clogged and how the liver reacts to toxins.

She urged students to start a conversation with parents about getting involved in family meal planning and cooking.

"Parents trade the family's health unknowingly (by eating processed food) for time," she said. "Time to spend with you."

Every student received a cookbook with quick, easy, healthy recipes that they can make for their families. They were asked to try to help prepare one meal a week.

Woodruff provided students with a survey to assess their eating habits now and she intends to return to the school in two months to see if the workshop changed at least 10% of students' eating and meal preparation habits.

"We know how to eat healthy, but we just keep getting worse," Richard said. "We show the kids what they are capable of. I can't talk about it without my whole body shivering."



VICTORIA GRAY Staff Photo
Students at St. Elizabeth Catholic Elementary School in Wainfleet, Addge Little, left, and Kipp Miller, right, with Sarah Woodruff from the University of Windsor demonstrate what happens to arteries when people eat processed foods.

Public Notice

**Public Meeting for the
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Thursday, February 7, 2013 at 6:00 p.m.

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Tribune File Photo

Now that Showboat Festival Theatre has ceased operations, the City of Port Colborne is exploring other options for the use of Roselawn Centre.

■ **HERITAGE BUILDING:** New tenant, buyer needed

Unnamed party expresses interest in Roselawn Centre

MARYANNE FIRTH
InPortNEWS Staff

PORT COLBORNE — There's still potential for Roselawn Centre to blossom.

The future of the Fielden Ave. facility has been up in the air since Showboat Festival Theatre — the building's main tenant — announced in September it was disbanding.

The city has been searching for interested parties looking to continue the tradition of arts and culture that has long had a home at the heritage site.

A request-for-proposal was issued by the city in November in attempt to solicit tenants for Roselawn, with the possibility of sale of the building also on the table.

The city provided notice in local newspapers, on the city's website and in direct e-mail to a list of proponents including ASTRO (Association of Summer Theatre Round Ontario).

Tours of the facilities were taken by two separate proponents, both interested in theatre operations.

Twice the city amended the closing date for the RFP, but still no proposals were received.

Since that time, however, the city has been contacted by an interested party.

"We have entertained a few meetings with an organization from within the region," Harry Hakim, Port Colborne's manager of community services, said at Monday night's city council meeting.

Representatives of the group are preparing documents on their proposal to bring back to their respective board, he said, unable to divulge information on who the potential proponent is.

It was through a newly formed community group, the Friends of Roselawn, that the contact was made between the organization and the city, said Ward 4 Coun. Ron Bodner.

The group has "a lot of good people who've got good ideas," he said, hoping to see a presentation come forward to council come budget time.

Bodner asked that councillors "keep an open mind" regarding possibilities for the centre.

He also urged residents to contact their ward councillors.

"Get off your hands and express your opinion," he said.

"If you think an arts and culture centre is important, step up and let this council know."

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■ **MUNICIPAL FINANCE:** City to charge Subway \$90 a month

Vale Centre rent figures questioned

MARYANNE FIRTH
InPortNEWS Staff

PORT COLBORNE — Dave Elliott was eager to know the dollars and sense behind Vale Health and Wellness Centre tenant agreements.

The Ward 1 councillor had several questions during the Monday, Jan. 14 council meeting pertaining to deals with Subway and Goods Sports Excellence.

He hoped to learn how staff ultimately decided upon a rental rate of \$10 per square foot.

That number was chosen after calls were made to several local businesses to determine the "going rate" for rent per square foot in the community, said community and corporate services director Peter Senese. Utilities, he added, are not included in that cost.

It was utilities that Elliott had even more concerns about.

The pro shop will pay \$51 a

month for utilities, or \$1.70 a day, and the restaurant \$90 a month, or \$3 a day.

"Who can operate a business on \$1.70 a day?" Elliott asked, assuming utilities must cost more.

As the facility's utilities are each under one respective meter, there's no way of knowing the amount individual sections of the building are using, said Senese. The city used a similar approach to determine utility costs as it did the rent, calling facilities similar to the Vale Health and Wellness Centre in other communities to determine going rates per square foot.

The pro shop was charged less because it's expected to be open mainly on evenings and only has access to hydro, which will likely only be used for lighting and to operate a skate sharpener, Senese said.

Subway, on the other hand, is likely to be a heavier user with

the restaurant open from morning to night and using all utilities.

A clause has been put in place in the Subway agreement that allows the city to obtain additional funds from the restaurant should it peak at \$400,000 in gross sales in a fiscal year.

"I believe that target is something that's not going to be reached," Elliott said, adding that many restaurants in town that figure would mean an "awfully successful year."

"That's a lot of subs to sell," he added.

He asked if base rent could be increased should the restaurant not be able to hit the \$400,000 ceiling.

The \$400,000 target was brought forward by Subway based on previous sales, Senese said. The target likely won't be met for several years, he said, though the restaurant believes it will be reached with time.

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■ JUNIOR B HOCKEY

Pirates come back against Warriors

Real Cormier made 35 saves between the pipes for the Port Colborne Pirates and his teammates did the rest by scoring four unanswered goals for a 5-3 victory over the Stoney Creek Warriors in Junior B Hockey.

Charlie Izaguirre and Trevor Smith each scored twice and Dima Lavenov also found the back of the net for Don Cherry's Port Colborne Pirates before an announced crowd of 397 at Westside Arena.

Port Colborne won despite being outshot 38-31 and finishing 0-for-4 on the power play.

James Cordell, Wesley St. Armand and Alexander Zaccaria replied for Stoney Creek which failed to earn at least a consolation point for the first time in five games.

It was Port Colborne's fourth win in as many games against Stoney Creek this season and the team's sixth in its last seven games.

On tap for the Pirates is a road game Thursday night against Stoney Creek and a home game the following night against the Buffalo Blades.

■ JUNIOR B HOCKEY: Pirates captain player of the month third straight time

Great Dayne is top dog again

In Port NewsStaff

PORT COLBORNE — Dayne Phillips has been the ultimate Pirate when it comes to collecting treasure this season.

Not only is the Port Colborne Pirates captain leading the Greater Ontario Junior Hockey League in scoring, he has achieved an unprecedented hat trick off the ice. In December the 20-year-old Port Colborne native became the first player to be selected as the Golden Horseshoe Conference's player of the month for the third straight time.

Phillips enjoyed a remarkable

December as he averaged nearly three points a game in 10 starts for the Don Cherry's Port Colborne Pirates. He netted four goals and collected 22 assists for his hometown hockey team.

With 15 goals and 69 assists in 38 games, Phillips leads all Junior B scorers in Ontario with 84 points. St. Catharines Falcons forward Ben Walsh is second in the provincial points race with 20 goals and 57 assists for 77 points.

Falcons rearguard Julian Luciani is December's defenceman of the month and Stoney Creek Warriors backstop Alexander Brooks-Potts last month's top goaltender.

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■ EDUCATION: Two elected officials absent for one-third of meetings

Catholic trustees missing meetings

VICTORIA GRAY inPortNews Staff

WELLAND — Some Niagara Catholic District School Board trustees are missing meetings.

Attendance figures for 2012 board meetings were analyzed by *The Tribune*. While some trustees have strong records, others do not.

Trustees Frank Fera and Ed Nieuwesteeg — who both represent Niagara Falls and Niagara-on-the-Lake — were among the worst offenders in terms of 2012 "excused absences."

Both were absent from six of 18 board meetings in 2012 according to meeting minutes posted on the board's web site.

Nieuwesteeg was also not at four committee-of-the-whole meetings while Fera was absent from three.

Fera said he had knee replacement surgery last May and missed three meetings. He also spends a lot of time during the winter months in Florida.

"Usually I wouldn't miss any. I tried to make most of them, but in this case it was because of the surgery," he said.

Nieuwesteeg, who owns Patterson Rural Home in Niagara Falls, said when he misses meetings it's work-related.

"Many visitations happen at night and sometimes there are staffing issues," he said. "For the most part my attendance over the last 14 years has been pretty high."

The board had 21 scheduled board meetings and met at 10 committee-of-the-whole meetings in 2012, but the minutes for three December meetings have not been approved by council and are not online.

Board chair Kathy Burtnik, a St. Catharines trustee who did not miss a meeting, said trustees are excused from meetings for personal reasons by motion if the trustee informed the board they would be absent.

"It's extremely important to be at the meeting, but it's also extremely understood that it's a position where sometimes life gets in the way," she said.

Although many trustees only missed

one or two meetings, the board only managed to have full attendance at six meetings — one-third.

The chair was paid \$16,900, the vice-chair \$13,777 and individual trustees were paid \$10,784 in 2012.

Burtnik doesn't think there's an attendance problem at board or committee-of-the-whole meetings because she said it's understood that sometimes people can't make them.

"Overall of eight trustees — who are extremely busy folks — we've done a great job overall of representing the interests of the public," she said. "We'd love everybody to be there every meeting, but sometimes personal life does take precedence."

She said trustees are only excused for good personal reasons and if board members were absent (without informing the board) for three meetings the board could impose sanctions. But that does not apply to excused members.

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BY THE NUMBERS

Trustee/board meetings and committee-of-the-whole meetings missed

Total 18 / 10 meetings

■ Ted O'Leary (Welland): 1 / 0

■ Dino Sicoli (Port Colborne, Fort Erie, Wainfleet): 3 / 1

■ Father Paul MacNeil (Grimsby, Lincoln, West Lincoln, Pelham): 0 / 1

■ Frank Fera (Niagara Falls, Niagara-on-the-Lake): 6 / 3

■ Ed Nieuwesteeg (Niagara Falls, Niagara-on-the-Lake): 6 / 4

■ Kathy Burtnik (St. Catharines), chair: 0 / 0

■ Maurice Charbonneau (St. Catharines), vice-chair: 2 / 1

■ Rhianon Burkholder (Thorold)/Burtnikholder: 1 / 0

■ POLITICS: 'We take this very seriously'

Council attendance record nearly spotless

MARYANNE FIRTH
InPortNEWS Staff

WAINFLEET — Roll call wasn't an issue for Wainfleet township council last year.

Aldermen and Mayor April Jeffs scored nearly perfect attendance for the 21 regular council meetings held throughout 2012.

Alds. Ted Hessels, Betty Koc and David Wyatt went the year without missing a single meeting, while Jeffs and Ald. Richard Dykstra each had only a single check in the absent column. "It shows the community that we take this very seriously. That we're dedicated," Jeffs said about council's near spotless record.

Jeffs said she'd like to improve upon her record and go without a single absence in 2013.

"You want to be there for the votes, to have your input," she said. "It's important to have your say."



Jeffs

Wainfleet's council has a "good idea of the temperature in the community" when it comes to certain issues that affect the township.

"Aldermen want to be there to discuss those issues, she said, and to

bring forward concerns of the constituents.

"There are certain circumstances you can't avoid," she said, that sometimes keep aldermen from attending meetings. Wainfleet's team, however, has shown great dedication and always provides a "heads-up" if they're unable to attend a meeting or event, she added.

"We're all really connected. That's the nice thing about having a small council and municipality."

If meetings are missed, Jeffs said she and aldermen follow up with one another to ensure no one misses a beat.

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Twitter: @mjfirth17bune

Ask Our

Pharmacists



LARRY BOGGIO
R. Ph. B. Sc. Pharm. (Jovoni)

TYLENOL/IBUPROFEN/ASPIRIN

There is often a great deal of confusion when it comes to over-the-counter products that contain Tylenol (acetaminophen), Aspirin (acetylsalicylic acid), and ibuprofen

Ibuprofen and Aspirin are similar products. They are both part of a class of medications called non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs). They are good for treating fever, pain, and inflammation. These medications help with arthritis, dental pain, and pain from broken bones and sprains. Ibuprofen is the medication found in Advil and Motrin. There is a new medication available over-the-counter in Canada called Aleve. It is also a good anti-inflammatory medication and can be used for the above purposes.

Anti-inflammatory medications are quite effective and can often be used in place of narcotics for short term pain management. However, not everyone should be using these products, and most people should avoid daily long-term use. NSAIDs, with long-term use can cause stomach erosion, ulcers, and bleeding. For patients on warfarin they are particularly dangerous because they can further increase a patient's risk of bleeding. They can also raise patient's blood pressure and damage their kidneys.

Aspirin should not be given to children, asthmatics, or pregnant women. Some over-the-counter medications contain Aspirin and people may be unaware of this. For example, Pepto-Bismol and some other antacids contain Aspirin. If you are unsure please ask your pharmacist if certain OTCs are safe for you.

There are number of arthritis rubs and creams available. Some of these contain Aspirin and other types of NSAIDs. If you are on warfarin or have problems with your stomach you should be careful with the use of these products. They still get absorbed in to your blood stream and can have negative effects.

In recent months there have been some media reports encouraging people to take 400mg of ibuprofen twice a week for its general anti-inflammatory properties. It is thought that inflammation may be involved in the formation of some cancers, such as colon cancer; therefore taking ibuprofen may play a role in helping to prevent some cancers. However, further research needs to be done in this area for confirmation of results and safety. It is also suggested that if you are at any risk for heart disease or stroke you take a daily 81mg Aspirin. Talk to your doctor if you think you could benefit from these preventative strategies.

Tylenol (acetaminophen) is used to treat pain and fever. Tylenol does not have the same anti-inflammatory properties that Aspirin or ibuprofen has but it is safer for some people to take. For patient's with arthritis who can't take NSAIDs it is the next best option. Tylenol is metabolized through the liver so it is best not taken by individuals with any type of liver disease. There is also a limit to the amount of Tylenol a patient should take in a day. People should not exceed more than four grams in a day. There are many cough and cold products that contain Tylenol. Please ask the pharmacist if you are taking multiple products.

Ibuprofen and Aspirin can be taken together. Typically ibuprofen should be given every 6-8 hours and Tylenol can be given every four to six. If you have a young child with a high fever it is okay to give Motrin every six hours and the Tylenol in between. It may provide some additional benefit and keep the fever down in between doses.

In general Tylenol, and NSAIDs are safe and effective for most people. These medications work very well and can provide much comfort and relief. If you are unsure what the best product is for you, your pharmacist will be happy to help you.

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■ **HEALTH CARE:** Hospital system must balance budget by March

NHS attacks \$13m deficit

GRANT LAFLECHE
QMI Agency Niagara

to slash Niagara Health System's \$13-million deficit was finally unveiled Thursday, Jan. 17, and hospital brass say cost-cutting measures

won't include the loss of beds, deep cuts in nursing staff or reductions in programming.

Interim NHS president and CEO

Sue Matthews said the hospital system will find other means to save money and raise revenue, including boosting parking fees, reducing redundant procedures and eliminating some vacant jobs.

"We don't know exactly how this will turn out, but we are working with our unions to minimize the actual number of layoffs," she said, indicating early retirements, filling only some vacant posts and providing incentives for those who want to leave the organization should mitigate job losses.

The last time the NHS went through this kind of cost-cutting effort, in 2008, only five jobs were eliminated. Matthews said even as the organization reduces the number of vacant posts and hopes to save some money by downsizing staff, the NHS will continue to hire clinical positions, including nurses and doctors.

"Patient care remains our No. 1 priority," she said.

The NHS has been grappling with its large operational deficit since the spring. Officials originally suggested it might have to eliminate beds to save money, but ultimately opted to find savings internally rather than reducing beds or programming.

The hospital system must have a plan in action by March, Matthews said, because provincial regulations do not allow a hospital system to operate with a deficit.

"The province has not indicated it will not provide more funding for hospital budgets." "We aren't alone in this. This is a process every hospital goes through, and it is something we are going to have to keep doing because of the economic situation," Matthews said.

Of the \$13 million the NHS must cut, Matthews said hospital officials have already put into action a plan to slash \$10 million. It has eliminated about 12 administrative and support staff positions, decentralized a nursing scheduling office and is moving to standardize equipment across the system to be more cost-effective.

Some operating rooms in Welland, St. Catharines and Niagara Falls hospitals will be shut down for six weeks, save for emergencies, and parking fees at all NHS sites have increased.

Other measures that seem like little things have added up to millions in savings, said NHS chief financial officer Angela Zangan.

"Like using less paper," she said. "That may seem like a small thing, but in an organization this size it really adds up."

Matthews said the NHS is also taking a more targeted approach to infection control and outbreak management. After the C. difficile outbreaks of 2011, the NHS instituted an



BOB TYMCZYNSKY QMI Agency Niagara
Interim chief Sue Matthews briefs the media on the outline of the budget plans for the Niagara Health System.

aggressive infection control policy, with enhanced measures in place even when there was not a superbug outbreak. Infection control experts told the NHS those measures were not needed on a constant basis, because it doesn't produce results and is expensive. Matthews said the NHS is now heading that advice.

Where the remaining \$3 million in savings will come from is still to be determined. Matthews said it will be found by working with staff and their respective unions. In particular, she said, the NHS must tackle overtime and sick time costs. The NHS reduced sick time costs by \$1.5 million over the past year, but has had less success with overtime. Still, Matthews said staff is trying to help, juggling shifts to avoid overtime costs that have run as high as \$4.5 million some years.

Also of concern, according to NHS officials, are wage increases expected to take effect for some staff in April.

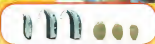
Hospital unions negotiate their contracts with the province, not the individual hospitals, and while the hospital tries to contain costs it is also bound by the terms of collective agreements. The current deficit situation has been building for a few years. The NHS had projected small deficits from 2010 to 2013, and pledged to balance its books by this year.

However, expected funding increases from the province did not materialize and rising expenses, the cost of controlling the C. difficile outbreak and new infection control measures, along with systemic overtime and sick time programs, created the current situation.

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■ **SAFETY:** Speed, idling issues to be looked into

Truck traffic a concern on King

MARYANNE FIRTH
InPortNEWS Staff

PORT COLBORNE — Keep on truckin' — but do it safely.

That's the message Ward 1 Coun. Dave Elliott brought forward to city council last week as he shared concerns from King St. residents about heavy truck traffic in the area.

Trucks can often be seen speeding down King St., heading both to and from ADM Milling and SouthPier Terminals, he said, adding residents north of Sugarloaf St. have "major concerns" about the safety issues this may cause.

Cars are often parked down both sides of King St., especially when the well-attended mass is taking place at St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church, and there are fears someone making their way across the street from between parked cars may someday get hit by a passing truck, Elliott said.

He asked that the city have dialogue with Niagara Regional Police in an effort to calm speeders. But the complaints don't stop with speed.

During some early mornings and late nights, trucks form a queue along King

St., waiting to enter company properties. While some have the courtesy to turn their vehicles off, others sit idling for significant amounts of time, Elliott said.

He questioned whether the city had a space it could offer up to marshal the trucks, where they could wait until called for their turn.

Ron Hanson believes this is not an ideal solution. The director of engineering and operations feels it would be difficult to control trucks as they're parking along King St. in parking stalls, not in traffic lanes, as they wait and aren't technically doing anything against rules and regulations.

The city does, however, have an anti-idling bylaw that could force drivers to turn their trucks off, he said.

Mayor Vance Badway suggested the city speak with ADM and SouthPier in hopes of coming up with a solution.

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■ HEALTH CARE: ECG, specialized beds needed in Port Colborne

Local hospital equipment

MARYANNE FIRTH
InPortNews Staff

PORT COLBORNE — It's the one time you don't want your ticket to be pulled — at least not if your eye is on the \$2,000 grand prize.

The annual Tim Hortons Elimination Dinner and Draw in support of Port Colborne Hospital Foundation takes place Friday, Feb. 15, at the Italian Canadian Cultural Centre.

Foundation administrator Debbie Spraggett and board member Claudia Brena stopped by Port Colborne city council last week to invite councillors to attend and urge them to get out their cheque books.

The event is a major fundraiser for the foundation, which works to purchase much-needed equipment for the hospital.

"There is no government



There is no government funding for this equipment."

Debbie Spraggett, hospital foundation administrator

funding for this equipment," Spraggett stressed as she explained that life-saving equipment is paid for through donations, planned giving and bequests.

The foundation is looking to raise funds for an ECG machine for the hospital's lab, an assisted exercise trainer for the physiotherapy department, a triple infusion pump for the urgent care centre, and specialized beds and Geomatrix mattresses

for floors 2 West and 2 South.

It has committed to purchasing more than \$60,000 in new and replacement equipment this fiscal year.

The event, which also includes live and silent auctions and a 50/50 draw, will begin at 6 p.m., with dinner to follow at 6:30.

Tickets for the dinner/draw are \$60 a person and include dinner, wine and one elimination ticket. Additional tickets will be available for purchase. Every 25th ticket drawn will win \$50.

Tickets purchased before Jan. 31 will be entered into a series of early bird draws for a chance to win one of 10 \$100 Tim Hortons gift cards.

For more information or to purchase tickets, call 905-834-4501 ext. 32126.

Maryanne Firth@stunmedia.ca
Twitter: @mfrfirth@tribune



WARD 4 COUN. Barb Butters, left, and WARD 3 COUN. Bea Kenny buy their tickets for the Tim Hortons Elimination Dinner and Draw from Claudia Brena, board member with Port Colborne Hospital Foundation.

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disappear and within a week it was completely gone - as if it was never there." Ian goes on, "This coming from a woman whose painful joints and ongoing sciatica were so bad just one week earlier, that the pain was unbearable but now has completely subsided." By now you are probably wondering what is LeafSource and why is it so effective? LeafSource is a 100% natural product derived from a proprietary organic mineral composite with over ten years of university research. LeafSource helps regulate the inflammatory process and the body's ability to repair itself. The vast majority (70 - 80%) of the population over the age of 50 have joint problems — often called osteoarthritis. This is due to the natural (or unnatural) wear and tear on joint tissue that

develops through the aging process. With joint inflammation, movement is limited and pain can be constant. LeafSource seems to have the ability to help people get their mobility and zest for life back. Millions of people seek treatment for their joint and inflammation problems by resorting to expensive, toxic prescription drugs (i.e. NSAIDs) with multiple side effects. These range from nausea and vomiting to serious intestinal disorders (bleeding, gas, pain) and even kidney and liver failure. Isn't that too large a price to pay for a little pain relief? LeafSource is a safe alternative to these destructive anti-inflammatory drugs that cause more problems than they solve. There are absolutely no side effects and it doesn't interfere with any other medications. Controlled experiments and observations have revealed that LeafSource is a potent anti-inflammatory that has been shown to bring a reduction to inflammation and pain within a few days. People notice great results in terms of more energy and less pain by taking anywhere from 2 to 6 capsules/day. Typical maintenance is usually 1 capsule twice daily. This product gets results! LeafSource is scientifically validated through more than 10 years of research at 4 universities, including the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences, Mercer University. Aside from its incredible

anti-inflammatory and pain reducing ability, it has also been shown to improve the performance of your daily nutrition and vitamin programs. It helps increase the absorption of vital nutrients, which in turn helps these nutrients work better. Better absorption = better results! It's almost as if they have become supercharged! LeafSource has also been shown to help enhance energy levels, improve intestinal health, strengthen hair, skin and nails and improve immune function. To see someone go from intense pain to a new lease on life within a week is truly incredible. Imagine being able to move freely without pain. Who wouldn't want to get out of bed in the morning with more energy? It's amazing how much of this stuff we take for granted, until it's gone! Ian adds, "I often recommend that LeafSource be taken with other natural joint products in order to help them work better and provide even faster relief. One of the things I hear most often from people who have tried LeafSource is they just plain feel better, have more energy and less pain. We're so confident, we guarantee LeafSource 100%! That alone should be enough to try this incredible product."

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